

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

1. – 20 (Canceled).

21. (Currently amended) A patient support comprising:

a mattress having a head section, a foot section spaced from the head section, and a seat section between the head section and the foot section, the seat section being dimensioned to support a seat region of a person,

~~a force sensor having dimensions less than or equal to the dimensions of the seat section of the mattress and configured to output a signal indicative of force applied to the seat section of the mattress~~ an inflatable cell associated with the seat section,

an air source operable to inflate the inflatable cell,

a pressure sensor operable to measure pressure in the inflatable cell,

a substantially rigid collector plate located above the inflatable cell and arranged to uniformly concentrate a portion of a person's weight on the inflatable bladder, and

a controller operably coupled to the ~~force~~ pressure sensor and to the air source, the controller being operable to automatically determine the a value for total body weight of a person positioned on the mattress based on the an output of the ~~force~~ pressure sensor.

22. (Canceled)

23. (Currently amended) The patient support of claim 22 21, comprising at least one baffle in the inflatable cell.

24. (Canceled)

25. (Currently amended) The patient support of claim 21, wherein the mattress includes a plurality of inflatable bladders and the controller is configured to signal the air source

to adjust the pressure of at least one of the mattress bladders based upon the patient's value for the total body weight as determined by the controller from the output of the ~~force~~ pressure sensor indicative of ~~force applied to the seat section of the mattress.~~

26. (Currently amended) The patient support of claim 21, further comprising a second ~~force sensor sized to fit within the dimensions of~~ inflatable cell associated with the head section of the mattress and a second pressure sensor operable to measure pressure in the second inflatable cell configured to output a signal indicative of force applied to the head section of the mattress, wherein the controller is ~~configured to receive the seat section output signal and the head section output signal~~ operably coupled to the second pressure sensor and is operable to determine the value for the total body weight of a patient person positioned on the mattress based on the seat section output signal and the head section output signal outputs from the first and second pressure sensors.

27. (Currently amended) The patient support of claim 26, further comprising an angle sensor coupled to the head section of the mattress to output a signal indicative of the angle of inclination of the head section relative to the seat section, wherein the controller is ~~configured~~ operable to determine the value for the total body weight of a patient person positioned on the mattress based on the seat section force sensor output signal, the head section force sensor output signal, outputs from the first and second pressure sensors and the angle sensor output signal.

28. (Currently amended) The patient support of claim 21, further comprising an angle sensor coupled to the head section of the mattress to output a signal indicative of the angle of inclination of the head section relative to the seat section, wherein the controller is ~~configured~~ operable to determine the value for the total body weight of a patient person positioned on the mattress based on the seat section force sensor output signal from the pressure sensor and the angle sensor output signal.

29. (Currently amended) A patient support comprising:

a mattress having a head section, a foot section spaced from the head section, and a seat section between the head section and the foot section, the seat section being dimensioned

to support a seat region of a person, at least the foot section including at least one inflatable bladder,

an air source operable to inflate the at least one inflatable bladder,

a force sensor sized to fit within the dimensions of the seat section of the mattress and configured to output a signal indicative of force applied to the seat section of the mattress, the force sensor comprising a substantially rigid lower plate, a plurality of force transducers above the lower plate, and a substantially rigid upper plate configured to concentrate a portion of a person's weight on the plurality of force transducers thereby to produce the signal, and

a controller configured to receive the output signal from the force sensor and automatically signal the air source to adjust pressure in the foot section of the mattress based on the output of the force sensor.

30. (Currently amended) The patient support of claim 29, further comprising a heel pressure relief bladder and wherein the controller is configured to signal the air source to adjust pressure in ~~[[a]] the heel pressure relief air bladder of the foot section of the mattress~~ based on the output of the seat section force sensor.

31. (Currently amended) The patient support of claim 29, wherein the plurality of force transducers of the force sensor comprises a plurality of ~~weight sensors~~ force sensing resistor pads.

32. (Currently amended) The patient support of claim 31, wherein ~~the force sensor comprises an~~ upper plate positioned above the ~~weight sensors~~ plurality of force transducers is substantially rigid and ~~[[a]] the~~ lower plate positioned below the ~~weight sensors~~ plurality of force transducers is substantially rigid.

33. (Currently amended) The patient support of claim 32, wherein ~~the force sensor comprises at least one standoff positioned between the upper plate and the lower plate~~ includes a plurality of standoffs, each standoff being positioned directly over a corresponding one of the plurality of force transducers.

34. - 40. (Canceled)

41. (New) The patient support of claim 21, wherein the controller is operable to automatically determine the value for total body weight of a person by using a look up table.

42. (New) The patient support of claim 21, wherein the controller is operable to automatically determine the value for total body weight of a person by using a mathematical equation.

43. (New) The patient support of claim 21, wherein at least one of the head section, the seat section, and the foot section comprises a foam material.

44. (New) The patient support of claim 21, wherein the inflatable cell is situated within the seat section.

45. (New) The patient support of claim 26, wherein the inflatable cell is situated within the seat section.

46. (New) The patient support of claim 45, wherein the second inflatable cell is situated within the head section.

47. (New) The patient support of claim 21, wherein the inflatable cell is situated outside the mattress and adjacent the seat section.

48. (New) The patient support of claim 29, wherein the plurality of force transducers of the force sensor comprises a plurality of a plurality of load cells.

49. (New) The patient support of claim 29, wherein the plurality of force transducers of the force sensor each comprise resistive ink.